

CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Status indicators have been included with each claim. This listing of claims has not been amended and is included for convenience. No new matter has been added to the claims.

1. (Previously Presented) A method for providing an extended manufacturing environment, comprising:

receiving, at a manufacturer's server, a communication from a customer of the manufacturer;

automatically transmitting, in response to the communication, an order for a first portion of a plurality of supplies to a first supplier and an order for a second portion of the plurality of supplies to a second supplier, the plurality of supplies being needed by the manufacturer to manufacture at least one product for the customer;

receiving an indicator that the order for the second portion of the plurality of supplies has been rejected by the second supplier;

providing the customer in real-time with detailed information about the at least one product as it is being manufactured by the manufacturer; and

restricting interactions between the customer and other customers, the first supplier, and the second supplier.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step comprises receiving the communication which comprises an order for the at least one product.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising running a simulation to determine whether the order for the at least one product can be filled by the manufacturer.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step comprises receiving the communication which comprises a request to change an existing order for the at least one product, the transmitting includes transmitting in response to the request and without approval from the manufacturer.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 further comprising running a simulation to determine at least one impact of making the change request.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the running step comprises running the simulation to determine at least one of a loss of ship date, a surcharge for re-assembling the at least one product, and an unexpected increase in price due to a change in sub-components of the at least one product.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step comprises receiving the communication which comprises a request for the plurality of supplies.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving, at the manufacturer's server, a request for detailed product quality information from the customer.

9. (Previously Presented) A system embodied in a computer-readable medium and for providing an extended manufacturing environment, the system comprising:

a manufacturing interface module configured to receive a communication from a customer of a manufacturer, automatically process the communication, and automatically pass control to an ordering module;

the ordering module configured to automatically transmit an order for a plurality of supplies to a supplier of the plurality of supplies, the plurality of supplies being needed by the manufacturer to manufacture at least one product for the customer; and

a communications interface module configured to provide the customer in real-time with detailed information about the product as it is being manufactured by the manufacturer and configured to control interactions between the customer and other customers, the supplier, and other suppliers,

the manufacturing interface module configured to receive an indicator that the order for the plurality of supplies has been rejected by the supplier.

10. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the communication comprises an order for the at least one product.

11. (Original) The system of claim 10 further comprising a simulation module configured to run a simulation to determine whether the order for the at least one product can be filled by the manufacturer.

12. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the communication comprises a request to change an existing order for the at least one product.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12 further comprising a simulation module configured to run a simulation to determine at least one impact of making the change request.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the simulation module is capable of running the simulation to determine at least one of a loss of ship date, a surcharge for re-assembling the at least one product, and an unexpected increase in price due to a change in sub-components of the at least one product.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the communication comprises a request for the plurality of supplies.

16. (Original) The system of claim 9 wherein the manufacturing interface module is further configured to receive from the customer a request for detailed product quality information.

17. (Previously Presented) An article of manufacture having computer-readable program means embodied therein for providing an extended manufacturing environment, comprising:

computer-readable program means for receiving, at a manufacturer's server, a communication from a customer of the manufacturer;

computer-readable program means for automatically processing the communication at the manufacturer's server;

computer-readable program means for automatically transmitting an order for supplies from the manufacturer's server to a supplier of the supplies, the supplies needed by the manufacturer to manufacture a first product for the customer and a second product different from the first product;

computer-readable program means for providing the customer in real-time with detailed information about the product as it is being manufactured by the manufacturer;

computer-readable program means for controlling interactions between the customer and other customers, the supplier, and other suppliers; and

computer-readable program means for receiving from the supplier a first indicator that a portion of the order associated with the first product has been rejected and a second indicator that a portion of the order associated with the second product has been accepted.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the detailed information includes quality information about the being-manufactured product.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the detailed information includes quantity information about the being-manufactured product.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the detailed information includes information associated with a location of the at least one product within a manufacturing floor, the location being associated with a workstation, the information associated with the location being defined in response to a scanning.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the detailed information includes statistical process control information about the being-manufactured product.

22. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the detailed information includes at least one of quality information or quantity information about the being-manufactured product.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the detailed information includes the location within the manufacturer of the being-manufactured product.

25. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the detailed information includes statistical process control information about the being-manufactured product.

26. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable program means of claim 17 wherein the detailed information includes at least one of quality information or quantity information about the being-manufactured product.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable program means of claim 17 wherein the detailed information includes the location within the manufacturer of the being-manufactured product.

29. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable program means of claim 17 wherein the detailed information includes statistical process control information about the being-manufactured product.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the interactions comprise discussion threads,

the method further comprising:

sending an alert based on at least a portion of the discussion threads; and

monitoring for an acknowledgement of the alert.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the interactions comprise streaming video.

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the interactions comprise at least one of discussion threads or streaming video.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable program of claim 17 wherein the interactions comprise at least one of discussion threads or streaming video.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the order for the second portion of the plurality of supplies is rejected based on the at least one product.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the communication is a direct supply order independent of a new product order and independent of a change to an existing order of the at least one product.

38. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically uploading a list of approved suppliers defined by the customer, the first supplier and the second supplier being selected from the list of approved suppliers.

39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the providing includes providing via a channelized view uniquely customized for the customer and selected from a set of channelized views, the restricting includes restricting via the channelized view.

40. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5 further comprising receiving from the customer an indicator of a rejection of the request to change the existing order, the indicator being defined after the running the simulation.

41. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the order for the plurality of supplies is transmitted to the supplier and the control is passed to the ordering module, both without approval by the manufacturer.